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09/377,402	08/20/1999	SHUNSUKE AKIFUJI	520.3746X00	7780

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EXAMINER
BACHNER, REBECCA M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2163	

DATE MAILED: 03/14/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

PTO-90C (Rev. 07-01)

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/377,402	AKIFUJI ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Rebecca Bachner	2163

-- *The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address* --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3</u> MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on <u>28 January 2002</u> .

2a)☒ This action is **FINAL.**   2b)☐ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1,2,4-6 and 8-16* is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1,2,4-6 and 8-16* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11)☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a)☐ approved b)☐ disapproved by the Examiner.

    If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13)☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a)☒ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

        1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

        2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .

        3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

    a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1)☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2)☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3)☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ .

4)☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .

5)☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6)☐ Other: _____ .

DETAILED ACTION

1.   The following is a Final Office Action in response to the communication received

on January 28, 2002. Claims 1-2, 4-6, and 8-9 are still pending. Claims 10-16 have

been added and are pending in this application.

Response to Amendments

2.   Applicant's amendment to page 23, of the specification where the drawing

previously referred to 12000 rather than 15000, has been sufficient to overcome the

drawing objections set forth in the previous office action.

Applicant's amendments to claim 1-2, 4, and 9 are sufficient to overcome the

§102 rejections set forth in the previous Office Action. Hence, the previous §102

rejections for those claims are withdrawn. However, new §103 rejections have been

established.

Applicant's amendments to claims 5-6, and 8 are sufficient to overcome the §103

rejections set forth in the previous office action. Hence, the previous §103 rejections for

those claims are withdrawn. However, new §103 rejections have been established.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3.   The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set
> forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and
> the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the

invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains.
Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

4.   Claims 1-2, 4-6 and 8-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. ~~102(e)~~ 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Flores et al. (P.N. 6,073,109) in view of Reid et al (P.N. 5,892,449).

(Amended) As per claim 1, Flores et al. disclose a workflow control method in a

workflow system connected to a plurality of client computers for carrying out business

procedures comprising a plurality of related business processes (see column 110, lines

26-33), at least one of the business procedures being allowed to execute some of the

business processes simultaneously (see column 2, line 33-62, and figure 1, the parallel

workflows allow the business procedures to be executed simultaneously), said workflow

control method is comprising the steps of:

previously defining status changes to be detected in business processes when a

plurality of related business processes are executed simultaneously by said client

computers (see column 2, lines 33-62, and column 4, lines 57-63, the status changes

are detected by the business processes using triggered actions, a plurality of the

business processes can be executed simultaneously with the parallel workflows);

selecting at least one user who is in charge of a business process

interdependent to the business process in which the status change was detected (see

column 4, lines 30-34, the observer is informed, or detects, the acts of the workflow,

these workflow acts include status changes); and

notifying a client computer corresponding to a selected user of the occurrence of

a status change in the related business process (see column 4, lines 30-34, an observer

is informed, or notified, of all acts occurring in the business process, also see column 13, lines 39-67, the follow up manager notifies the transaction manager by sending an e-mail, executing a script, or other defined actions).

Flores et al. do not disclose an abnormal status change. However, Reid et al (P.N. 5,892,449) disclose detecting an occurrence of an abnormal status change in one of the plurality of related business processes (see column 6, lines 45-59, if the seven bit code is abnormal then the status will result in an abnormal status change). It would be obvious for Flores et al. to notify the client of an abnormal status change as Flores et al. already disclose notifying the client of a status change. At the time of the invention it would have been obvious for Flores et al. to notify the user of an abnormal (or discontinuous) status change as the observer is informed of "the acts in the workflow" and an abnormal status change occurs in the workflow processes. A status device is used so that business processes in a workflow system may run smoothly and an observer and others concerned with the workflow processes would use the status to stay informed of any abnormalities. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to include abnormal status changes as it allows the observer to more accurately know what is occurring during the workflow processes.

(Amended) As per claim 2, Flores et al. disclose in the workflow control method that status changes in the business process that are detected (see column 4, lines 57-63, all status changes are detected and another action results from the trigger). Flores do not disclose an abnormal status change in the business process that are detected

includes a discontinuance of the business processes. Reid et al. disclose an abnormal

status change that is detected including a discontinuance of the business processes

(see column 6, lines 46-59, if the seven bit code is abnormal then the status will result in

an abnormal status change and the transmittance will be discontinued). It would be

obvious for Flores et al. to have an abnormal status change detect a discontinuance as

Flores et al. already disclose a status change. At the time of the invention it would have

been obvious for Flores et al. to notify the user of an abnormal (or discontinuous) status

change as the observer is informed of "the acts in the workflow" and an abnormal status

change occurs in the workflow processes. A status device is used so that business

processes in a workflow system may run smoothly and people concerned with the

workflow process would use the status to stay informed of any abnormalities. One of

ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to include abnormal status changes

as it allows the status signal to more accurately state what is occurring in the workflow

processes.

(Amended) As per claim 4, Flores et al. disclose a workflow control method

according to claim 1, wherein the selection of at least one user is carried by referring

rules defining the relation between predetermined business procedures and related

client computers (see column 8, lines 52-59, the workflow server is a type of workflow

engine and it uses preset rules and procedures. It also selects the computers such as

the STF processors and the transaction manager to execute the business processes).

(Amended) As per claim 5, Flores et al. disclose a workflow system connected to a plurality of client computer for executing business procedures including a plurality of business processes (see column 1, lines 12-22, and column 110, lines 26-33), at least one of the business procedures being allowed to execute some of the business processes simultaneously (see column 2, lines 33-62, the business procedures can execute in parallel, or simultaneously) comprising:

a status watcher for detecting a status change in a business process being executed, including an occurrence of a status change in the business process (see column 4, lines 30-34, and 54-63, and column 20, lines 42-47, the triggers change the status of the workflow and the transaction manager initiates new workflow processes. An observer is informed, or notified, of all acts occurring in the business process. The observer therefore detects the type of change to the status);

a workflow engine connected to the status watcher, for controlling the execution of each of the business procedures based on the status change detected by the status watcher and the predetermined business procedure definitions (see column 4, lines 30-34, the observer is a status watcher, the observer is informed, or detects, the acts of the workflow, these workflow acts include status changes, also see column 4, lines 57-63, the status changes are detected by the business processes using the triggered action); and

a notifier for notifying at least one of the client computer of the occurrence of the stat change detected by the status watcher, the user of the client computer being in charge of a business process interdependent to a business process in which the status

change was detected (see column 4, lines 30-34, an observer is informed, or notified, of all acts occurring in the business process, also see column 13, lines 39-6, the follow up manager notifies the transaction manager by sending an e-mail, executing a script, or other defined actions).

Flores et al. do not disclose a status watcher for detecting an occurrence of an abnormal status change in the business process. However, Reid et al. (P.N. 5,892,449) disclose detecting an occurrence of an abnormal status change in one of the plurality of related business processes (see column 6, lines 45-59, if the seven bit code is abnormal then the status will result in an abnormal status change). It would be obvious for Flores et al. to detect an abnormal status change as Flores et al. already disclose a status watcher. At the time of the invention it would have been obvious for Flores et al. to have the status watcher detect an abnormal or discontinuous status change as the observer is informed of "the acts in the workflow" and an abnormal status change occurs in the workflow processes. A status device is used so that business processes in a workflow system may run smoothly and an observer and others concerned with the workflow process would want to use the status to stay informed of any abnormalities. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to include abnormal status changes as it allows the observer to more accurately know what is occurring in the workflow processes.

(Amended) As per claim 6, Flores et al. teach all disclose a status watcher (see column 4, lines 30-34, the observer is a status watcher, the observer is informed, or

detects, the acts of the workflow, these workflow acts include status changes). Flores et al. does not disclose detecting a discontinuance in the business process. However, Reid et al. (P.N. 5,892,449) disclose detecting an occurrence of an abnormal status change or discontinuance in a business process (see column 6, lines 46-59, if the seven bit code is abnormal then the status will result in an abnormal status change and the transmittance will be discontinued). It would be obvious for Flores et al. to detect discontinuance or an abnormal status change as Flores et al. already disclose status changes. At the time of the invention it would have been obvious for Flores et al. to detect an abnormal or discontinuous status change as the observer is informed of "the acts in the workflow" and an abnormal status change occurs in the workflow processes. A status device is used so that business processes in a workflow system may run smoothly and an observer and others concerned with the workflow process would want to use the status to stay informed of any abnormalities. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to include discontinuous or abnormal status detection as it allows the observer to more accurately know what is occurring in the workflow processes.

(Amended) As per claim 8, Flores et al. teach all the limitations of claim 7 and Flores also disclose a resource selector for receiving an instruction and an identifier of the business process on which the abnormal status change was detected from the workflow engine, and selecting the client computer to be notified of said abnormal status change by referring predetermined rules previously defining the relation between

predetermined business procedures and client computers thereby to designate the client computer to said notifier (see in column 12, lines 26-34).

(Amended) As per claim 9, Flores et al. disclose a storage medium capable of reading out stored information there from by a computer which stores programs for realizing the workflow control method (see column 11, lines 31-67 and column 110 lines 63-64, the transaction database stores the information about the workflow control method and can be read out by the transaction manager by way of the instantiator module).

As per claim 10, Flores et al. disclose all the limitations of claim 8 and the workflow system wherein the status watcher, the workflow engine, the notifier and the resource selector are individual programs executed concurrently to control the execution of each of the business procedures (see column 2, lines 33-62, the workflow system is executed in parallel and therefore each of the business procedures can be executed concurrently).

As per claim 11, Flores et al. disclose the workflow system according to claim 8, further comprising a status watcher and for a user retrevial unit for displaying the status change by the status watcher (see column 4, lines 30-34, and 45-47, the observer is a type of status watcher, the performer must inherently use a user retrieval unit to determine if a workflow is completed to satisfaction).

Flores et al. do not disclose handling abnormal status. Reid et al. teach creating

attributes to handle the abnormal status detected by the status watcher using an

exception handler unit (see column 6, lines 18-59, the bits are attributes describing the

status of the workflow, an abnormal or discontinuous status can be detected, an

exception handler unit is inherently used in order to determine that there is an error, or

abnormality, so that the controller can display an error message). It would be obvious

for Flores et al. to create attributes to handle the abnormal status detected by the status

watcher using an exception handler unit as Flores et al. already disclose a status

watcher. At the time of the invention it would have been obvious for Flores et al. to

create attributes for an abnormal (or discontinuous) status change as Flores et al.

already disclosed an observer that is informed of "the acts in the workflow. An

abnormal status change occurs within the workflow process and attributes would be

needed to create an abnormal status signal. A status device is used so that business

processes in a workflow system may run smoothly and an observer and others

concerned with the workflow process would want to use the status to stay informed of

any abnormalities. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated create

attributes to handle the abnormal status detected by the status watcher using an

exception handler unit as it allows the observer to more accurately know what is

occurring in the workflow processes.

As per claim 12, Flores et al. disclose a workflow management system for

controlling an order of execution of business procedures each including a plurality of

business processes and at least one business procedure being allowed to execute

some of the business processes simultaneously (see column 2, line 33-62, and figure 1,

the parallel workflows allow the business procedures to be executed simultaneously),

said workflow management system comprising:

a client application to be executed by one or more client computers (see column

3, lines 31-37, and column 7, lines 31-44, a client application is executed on one or

more client computers);

a server application to be executed by a server computer for communicating with

the client application (see column 3, lines 31-37, the server application is executed by a

server computer and communicates with the client application);

an application database for storing data for the server application (see column 9,

lines 31-33, the administrator database stores data for the server application);

a status watcher for detecting a status change in a business process being

executed in the application database in a business process (see column 4, lines 30-34,

and 54-63, and column 20, lines 42-47, the triggers change the status of the workflow

and the transaction manager initiates new workflow processes, an observer is informed,

or notified, of all acts occurring in the business process, the observer therefore detects

the type of change to the status);

a workflow engine for controlling the execution of each of the business

procedures based on the status change detected by the status watcher and

predetermine business procedure definitions (see column 4, lines 30-34, the observer is

a status watcher, the observer is informed, or detects, the acts of the workflow, these

workflow acts include status changes and see column 4, lines 57-63, the status

changes are detected by the business processes using the triggered action).

a notifier for notifying the occurrence of a status change in the business process

to at least one of the client computers (see column 4, lines 30-34, an observer is

informed, or notified, of all acts occurring during the business process).

Flores et al. does not disclose an abnormal status change. However, Reid et al

(P.N. 5,892,449) disclose detecting an occurrence of an abnormal status change in one

of the plurality of related business processes (see column 6, lines 46-59, if the seven bit

code is abnormal then the status will result in an abnormal status change). It would be

obvious for Flores et al. to notify the client of an abnormal status change as Flores et al.

already disclose notifying the client of a status change. At the time of the invention it

would have been obvious for Flores et al. to notify the user of an abnormal (or

discontinuous) status change as the observer is informed of "the acts in the workflow"

and an abnormal status change occurs in the workflow processes. A status device is

used so that business processes in a workflow system may run smoothly and an

observer and others concerned with the workflow process would want to use the status

to stay informed of any abnormalities. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been

motivated to include abnormal status changes as it allows the observer to more

accurately know what is occurring in the workflow processes.

As per claim 13, Flores et al. disclose the workflow management system with all

the limitations cited in claim 12, further comprising a resource selector for receiving an

instruction and an identifier of the business process on which the discontinuance was

detected from the workflow engine, and selecting the client computer to be notified of

the discontinuance by referring predetermining rules previously defining the relation

between predetermining business procedures and client computers (see in column 12,

lines 26-34).

As per claim 14, Flores et al. disclose the workflow management system

according to claim 12, wherein the status watcher, the workflow engine, the notifier and

the resource selector are individual programs executed concurrently to control the

execution of each of the business procedures (see column 2, lines 33-62, the workflow

system is executed in parallel and therefore each of the business procedures can be

executed concurrently).

As per claim 15, Flores et al. disclose the workflow system according to claim 12,

further comprising a status watcher and for a user retrevial unit for displaying the status

change by the status watcher (see column 4, lines 30-34, and 45-47, the observer is a

type of status watcher, the performer must inherently use a user retrieval unit to

determine if a workflow is completed to satisfaction).

Flores et al. do not disclose handling abnormal status. Reid et al. teach creating

attributes to handle the abnormal status detected by the status watcher using an

exception handler unit (see column 6, lines 18-59, the bits are attributes describing the

status of the workflow, an abnormal or discontinuous status can be detected, an

exception handler unit is inherently used in order to determine that there is an error, or

abnormality, so that the controller can display an error message). It would be obvious

for Flores et al. to create attributes to handle the abnormal status detected by the status

watcher using an exception handler unit as Flores et al. already disclose a status

watcher. At the time of the invention it would have been obvious for Flores et al. to

create attributes for an abnormal (or discontinuous) status change as Flores et al.

already disclosed an observer that is informed of "the acts in the workflow" and

abnormal status changes occur within the workflow process and attributes are needed

to create an abnormal status signal. A status device is used so that business processes

in a workflow system may run smoothly and an observer and others concerned with the

workflow process =use the status to stay informed of any abnormalities. One of

ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated create attributes to handle the

abnormal status detected by the status watcher using an exception handler unit as it

allows the observer to more accurately know what is occurring in the workflow

processes.

As per claim 16, Flores et al. discloses the workflow management system

according to claim 15, wherein the user selection is made by referring to rules defining

the relationship between predetermined business procedures and client computers (see

column 2, lines 59-62, a workflow system uses a set of rules to define the relationship

between performers and customers as shown in the phases of the workflow).

Response to Arguments

5.   Applicant's arguments with regard to the §102 rejections based on Flores et al.

have been fully considered. In the remarks, the Applicant discuses in claim 1

(1) notifying clients of the occurrence of an abnormal status change and (2) allowing a

simultaneous business process. Applicant argues (3) that there is no disclosure in

Flores et al. supporting the notification of a discontinued task process, and therefore

Flores et al. do not teach claim 2.

In response to (1) claim 1 stating that the client is notified of the occurrence of an

abnormal status change, Flores et al. disclose client notification when the status is

changed. Column 4, lines 30-34, and 57-63, discusses an observer and triggers.

Flores et al. define the observer to be a type of client notification and defines triggered

and trigger to be an action in the workflow based on status that cause another action to

occur. The observer is informed of "the acts in the workflow". Therefore, the observer is

notified of the occurrence of any status changes as the status changes are part of the

acts in the workflow. The applicant's amended claim 1 also states that the status

change is an abnormal or discontinuous status change. Although Flores et al. do not

explicitly teach an abnormal status change, Reid et al. teach in column 2, lines 46-59, of

an abnormal occurrence and the resulting discontinuous transmittance of the process

along with the status change. As stated in the rejection above, it would be obvious for

Flores et al. to notify the client of an abnormal status change as Flores et al. already

disclose notifying the client of a status change (discussed above). It would be obvious

at the time of the invention to notify the user of an abnormal (or discontinuous) status change as the observer is informed of "the acts in the workflow" and an abnormal status change occurs in the workflow processes.

In response to Applicant's discussion (2) of claim 1 stating that "at least one of the business procedures being allowed to execute some of the business processes simultaneously", Flores et al. disclose that the processes can execute simultaneously. In column 2, line 33-62, and in figure 1, Flores et al. disclose parallel workflows. Furthermore, parallel workflows are workflows (or processes) that are executed simultaneously. Therefore, there is no difference between simultaneously executing workflows and parallel workflows as disclosed by Flores et al. and the applicants argument is not found persuasive.

In response to Applicant's argument (3) stating that "any function of issuing a notification to inform a user that one of his/her tasks (business processes) should be interrupted because its interdependent process has already discontinued," the examiner agrees that Flores et al. only disclose a workflow control method with status changes. In column 4, lines 57-63, Flores et al. disclose that status changes are detected and another action results from the trigger. Flores et al. do not disclose an abnormal status change in the business process. Reid et al. in column 6, lines 46-59, disclose an abnormal status change that is detected including a discontinuance of the business processes. It would be obvious for Flores et al. to have an abnormal status change detect a discontinuance as Flores et al. already disclose a status device and these

devices are used in business processes to remain informed of any abnormalities occurring in the workflow.

6.   Applicant's arguments with regard to the §103 rejections based on Flores et al (P.N. 6,073,109) and Tamaki et al. have been fully considered. Applicant argues that (1) Flores et al. and Tamaki et al. do not disclose the features of the present invention as cited specifically in claim 5 and that Flores et al. simply describes a workflow system and (2) that Flores et al. do not disclose a status watcher.

In response to Applicant's argument (1) that Flores et al. Tamaki et al. does not disclose the features of the present invention as cited specifically in claim 5, the Examiner respectfully disagrees. However, the Tamaki et al. reference has been withdrawn. Instead it can be shown by Flores et al. that a status watcher, a workflow engine and a notifier are all taught. Flores et al. do not simply describe a workflow system. Flores et al. disclose a system that manages a business process through triggered actions and various phases of action as shown in figure 3 and in column 4.

In response to the Applicant's argument (2) that Flores et al. do not disclose a status watcher, the Examiner respectfully disagrees. Flores et al. disclose an observer that knows what business processes occur during the workflow. In column 4, line 30-34, the observer is defined as one that is "informed of acts in the workflow and has access to the information and data associated with the workflow." The Applicant begins defining a status watcher to be "for detecting a status change in a business process being executed". Therefore, an observer is a status watcher as they both detect status

change in the business process executed. Flores et al. do not, however, disclose the second part of the definition of a status watcher which is "detecting an occurrence of an abnormal status change". However, Reid et al. disclose detecting an occurrence of an abnormal status change in one of the plurality of related business processes in column 6, lines 45-59. It would be obvious for Flores et al. to notify the client of an abnormal status change as Flores et al. already disclose notifying the client of a status change (discussed above). At the time of the invention it would have been obvious for Flores et al. to notify the user of an abnormal (or discontinuous) status change as the device is used so that one could stay informed of any abnormalities that occur during the workflow process.

Conclusion

7.   No claims allowed.

8.   Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office Action. Accordingly, THISACTION IS MADE FINAL. See MPEP 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not

mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the

shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any

extension fee pursuant of to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later

than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

9.   Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the

examiner should be directed to Rebecca Bachner whose telephone number is 703-305-

1972. The examiner can normally be reached Monday - Friday from 8:00am to 4:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's

supervisor, Tariq Hafiz, can be reached at 703-305-9643.

The fax numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is

assigned are as follows:

    703-746-7238   [After Final Communication]

    703-746-7239   [Official Communications]

    703-746-7240   [For status inquiries, draft communication]

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or

proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-

3900.

KYLE J. CHOI
PRIMARY EXAMINER
Art Unit 2163

RMB
February 28, 2002